

IKE SKELTON
4TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

2206 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2504
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-2876
website: www.house.gov/skelton

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2504

April 20, 2004

514-B N.W. SEVEN HIGHWAY
BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64014-2733
(816) 228-4242

1401 SOUTHWEST BLVD., SUITE 101
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65109-2429
(573) 635-3499

219 NORTH ADAMS STREET
LEBANON, MO 65536-3000
(417) 532-7964

908 THOMPSON BLVD.
SEDALIA, MO 65301-4593
(660) 826-2675

His Excellency

Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
601 New Hampshire Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

As the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee of the United States House of Representatives, I am very familiar with the important working relationship between our two nations. I especially appreciate the cooperation between our militaries, which has been well documented through the years.

While our military partnerships are meaningful, the United States and Saudi Arabia share other interests that are mutually beneficial to our citizens, including the production of crude oil. As you know, oil prices, reflected at gasoline pumps, have jumped dramatically since OPEC's decision on April 1 to cut oil production by four percent. While I realize crude oil prices have risen for various reasons, I am convinced OPEC's action has impacted the marketplace most negatively.

I am disappointed in OPEC's recent policy change, but I am also quite concerned about recently published reports that Saudi Arabia is planning to increase oil production to coincide with the U.S. presidential election. Missourians need relief from high fuel prices immediately, not in the fall and not for political reasons. Let me take a moment to share with you how decreased oil production is impacting the residents of Missouri I am privileged to represent in Congress.

Missouri's Fourth Congressional District is primarily rural and the residents who live there rely heavily on transportation to make a living – especially farmers and ranchers. As fuel prices rise, the negative impact on Missouri's agricultural producers will be significant. For example, farmers' per acre costs associated with diesel fuel for planting, spraying, and harvesting crops is approximately \$6.10/acre for corn, \$3.90/acre for soybeans, and \$3.33/acre for wheat at current farm diesel rates of \$1.23 per gallon. Adding only one cent to farmers' fuel costs would increase their expenses by over nine percent, according to economists at the University of Missouri.

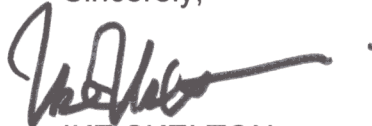
Other Missourians are facing similar economic strain due to high fuel prices. An average Missouri family with two vehicles may pay as much as \$348 per year more for gasoline if current retail pump prices remain at or above their current levels. To Fourth

District residents, whose average annual per capita income is \$20,688, this amount is not trivial. Additionally, the Show-Me State business community and tourism industry are feeling the economic burdens of high fuel prices and will begin passing their added costs to Missouri consumers in the coming weeks.

It is my sincere hope the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other OPEC nations will view high gasoline prices with alarm and will work toward reversing the April 1 OPEC ruling and begin to increase oil production. This is very important to the citizens of the United States, who have been friends of the Saudi people since diplomatic relations were established in 1933 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. On behalf of Missouri farmers, business owners, truckers, and commuters, let me urge the Kingdom to quickly increase its oil production. Your actions will be of great assistance to all Americans.

With best regards, I remain

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ike Skelton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

IKE SKELTON
Member of Congress

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His Excellency
Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah
Ambassador of Kuwait
2940 Tilden St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

As the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee of the United States House of Representatives, I am very familiar with the important working relationship between our two nations. I especially appreciate the cooperation between our militaries, which increased dramatically in the wake of the crisis caused by Saddam Hussein in 1990.

While our military partnerships are meaningful, the United States and Kuwait share other interests that are mutually beneficial to our citizens, including the production of crude oil. As you know, oil prices, reflected at gasoline pumps, have jumped dramatically since OPEC's decision on April 1 to cut oil production by four percent. While I realize crude oil prices have risen for various reasons, I am convinced OPEC's action has impacted the marketplace most negatively. I am disappointed in OPEC's recent policy change and wish to take a moment to share with you how its decision is impacting the residents of Missouri I am privileged to represent in Congress.

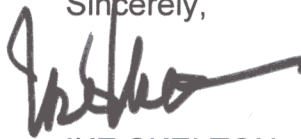
Missouri's Fourth Congressional District is primarily rural and the residents who live there rely heavily on transportation to make a living – especially farmers and ranchers. As fuel prices rise, the negative impact on Missouri's agricultural producers will be significant. For example, farmers' per acre costs associated with diesel fuel for planting, spraying, and harvesting crops is approximately \$6.10/acre for corn, \$3.90/acre for soybeans, and \$3.33/acre for wheat at current farm diesel rates of \$1.23 per gallon. Adding only one cent to farmers' fuel costs would increase their expenses by over nine percent, according to economists at the University of Missouri.

Other Missourians are facing similar economic strain due to high fuel prices. An average Missouri family with two vehicles may pay as much as \$348 per year more for gasoline if current retail pump prices remain at or above their current levels. To Fourth District residents, whose average annual per capita income is \$20,688, this amount is not trivial. Additionally, the Show-Me State business community and tourism industry are feeling the economic burdens of high fuel prices and will begin passing their added costs to Missouri consumers in the coming weeks.

It is my sincere hope Kuwait and other OPEC nations will view high gasoline prices with alarm and will work toward reversing the April 1 OPEC ruling and begin to increase oil production. This is very important to the citizens of the United States, who have stood with the Kuwaiti people in times of trouble. On behalf of Missouri farmers, business owners, truckers, and commuters, let me urge Kuwait to quickly increase its oil production. Your actions will be of great assistance to all Americans.

With best regards, I remain

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Member of Congress

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His Excellency
Bader Omar Al-Dafa
Ambassador of Qatar
4200 Wisconsin Ave, NW
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

As the Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee of the United States House of Representatives, I am very familiar with the important working relationship between our two nations. I especially appreciate the cooperation between our militaries, which increased dramatically in 2003 when the U.S. moved its Combat Air Operations Center to Qatar.

While our military partnerships are meaningful, the United States and Qatar share other interests that are mutually beneficial to our citizens, including the production of crude oil. As you know, oil prices, reflected at gasoline pumps, have jumped dramatically since OPEC's decision on April 1 to cut oil production by four percent. While I realize crude oil prices have risen for various reasons, I am convinced OPEC's action has impacted the marketplace most negatively. I am disappointed in OPEC's recent policy change and wish to take a moment to share with you how its decision is impacting the residents of Missouri I am privileged to represent in Congress.

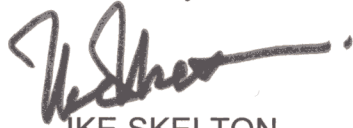
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It is my sincere hope Qatar and other OPEC nations will view high gasoline prices with alarm and will work toward reversing the April 1 OPEC ruling and begin to increase oil production. This is very important to the citizens of the United States. On behalf of Missouri farmers, business owners, truckers, and commuters, let me urge Qatar to quickly increase its oil production. Your actions will be of great assistance to all Americans.

With best regards, I remain

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